Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-17. (cancelled)

18. (currently amended) A method for routing of data packets for avoiding circulation of the data packets, in a packet-switched network, made up of routers, which uses traffic distribution, the method comprising:

providing a routing table for each node in the packet-switched network for forwarding data packets through the packet-switched network, wherein each routing table comprises next hop data for each pair of ingress/egress nodes where the data packet can enter and leave the packet-switched network respectively;

assigning a label to a data packet at an ingress node where the data packet enters the network, wherein the label comprises data representing the ingress node and an egress node where the data packet will leave the packet-switched network;

forwarding ~~a~~ the data packet from the ingress node to the egress node by an internal router of the packet-switched network by accessing the routing table for each node traversed in the packet-switched network, and reading the next hop data for the pair of ingress/egress nodes that coincides with the label; and

providing alternative routes for the forwarding of the data packet in the routing table for each pair of ingress/egress nodes when an alternate next hop is available~~, wherein~~

~~the forwarding of the data packet is carried out by using at least one item of data about the access interface at which the data packet entered the packet-switched network and one item of data about the egress interface, at which the data packet is to leave the packet-switched network~~.

19. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, further comprising:

providing the data packet at the ~~access interface~~ ingress node with identification data used by the internal router to identify the ingress node and egress node ~~access interface and the egress interface~~.

20. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 19, wherein the identification data include an identifier or a network address for the ingress node and egress node ~~access interface and the egress interface~~.

21. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 20, wherein

at the ~~access interface~~ ingress node the data packet is supplied with a data field, and wherein

the internal router takes from the data field the data about the ~~access interface~~ ingress node at which the packet entered the packet-switched network and the data about its egress node ~~interface~~.

22. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 21, wherein

the data packet is supplied with a data field, wherein

the data field is added onto the data packet as a header or a trailer, and wherein

the data field includes an identifier for the ~~access interface~~ ingress node and the egress node ~~interface~~.

23. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 21, wherein

the data packet is supplied with two data fields, wherein

each of the data fields is added to the data packet as a header or a trailer, wherein

one of the data fields includes an identifier for the ~~access interface~~ ingress node and the other data field includes an identifier for the egress node ~~interface~~.

24. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 22, wherein a bit sequence is appended to or prefixed to at least one data field, identifying the data field as such.

25. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 22, wherein

at the ingress node ~~interface~~, the data packet is supplied with at least one data field, and wherein

this data field is removed at the egress node ~~interface~~.

26. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 21, wherein at least one data field is provided by ~~an MPLS~~ a Multiprotocol Label Switching label.

27. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 20, wherein the identification data is written into a field provided as part of the format for the data packet.

28. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, wherein

the egress node ~~interface~~ is referenced by an identifier, wherein

the identifier of the egress node ~~interface~~ is determined by reference to a network address in the network, to which the data packet is to be forwarded after it has traversed the packet-switched network, and wherein

the determination of the identifier of the egress node ~~interface~~ is carried out at the ingress node ~~interface~~ by reference to the network address, using a table.

29. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, further comprising:

supplying the data packet at the ingress node ~~access interface~~ with an identification data used by the internal router for identifying the ingress node ~~access interface~~, wherein the identification data include an identifier or a network address for the ingress node ~~access interface~~; and

determining the data about the egress node ~~interface~~ by the internal router by using address data extracted from the data packet.

30. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the internal router determines the data about the ingress node ~~access interface~~ and the data about the egress node ~~interface~~ by using address data extracted from the data packet.

31. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, wherein ~~the forwarding of the data packet is effected with the help of a routing table,~~ the routing table assigns the data about the ~~access interface~~ ingress node at which the data packet entered the packet-switched network and the data about the egress node ~~interface~~ to a network address for the next hop.

32. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 18, further comprising:

supplying the data packet at the ingress node ~~access interface~~ with a data field for identifying the flow; and

performing the forwarding of the data packet by the internal router according to the data field.

33. (currently amended) An internal router in a packet-switched network for performing a method for routing of data packets for avoiding circulation of the data packets, in a packet-switched network, made up of routers, which uses traffic distribution, ~~the method~~ comprising:

a routing table stored for each node in the packet-switched network for forwarding data packets through the packet-switched network, wherein each routing table comprises next hop data for each pair of ingress/egress nodes where the data packet can enter and leave the packet-switched network respectively;

wherein the internal router:

assigns a label to a data packet at an ingress node where the data packet enters the network, wherein the label comprises data representing the ingress node and an egress node where the data packet will leave the packet-switched network;

forwards~~ing~~ ~~a~~ the data packet from the ingress node to the egress node ~~by an internal router of the packet-switched network~~ by accessing the routing table for each node traversed in the packet-switched network, and reading the next hop data for the pair of ingress/egress nodes that coincides with the label; and

provides ~~providing~~ alternative routes for the forwarding of the data packet in the routing table for each pair of ingress/egress nodes when an alternate next hop is available~~, wherein~~

~~the forwarding of the data packet is carried out by using at least one item of data about the access interface at which the data packet entered the packet-switched network and on item of data about the egress interface, at which the data packet is to leave the packet-switched network, wherein the internal router comprises a routing table which assigns the data about the access interface at which the data packet entered the packet-switched network and the data about the egress interface to a network address for the next hop~~.